

Mr. Mardesich: The civil service system was originally passed by the people, by initiative, not by the Legislature. The Legislature always requested a civil service system, and they never did anything about it. They then went the initiative route to pass it. I don't think the people really gave much thought to the effect, except the propaganda was "longevity keeps experience," rather than "make it all a political mash." There is some political mash to the non-civil service system. But the mash on the other side is once you get a bad one, it's hard to get rid of him. And that's just as prevalent, believe me.

Go ask any administrator down there who they've fired lately. There are three stages—I'm going back a few years—there were three stages of appeal, and pretty soon you'd spend months and months and months fighting over one firing. "Ignore it," was their response. "To heck with it. Get another guy, replace him, and send him over someplace else to work in the lower echelon." That kind of thing. "Put him at a desk over there where he doesn't get in anybody's way." That goes on, simply because of the difficulty of firing under the civil service system.

Ms. Boswell: Was there any attempt by the Legislature to change that at all?

Mr. Mardesich: I don't recall whether we actually got that deeply into it. We could make a point with every administrator. We made it a point to ask, "How many people have you fired? Do you not have any people you think you should be firing?" and so on and so forth. We'd get the point across, subtly sometimes, and sometimes not so subtly. "Your budget is now going to be cut by—that fellow's salary is \$20,000 a year? We're going to cut your budget by \$140,000. Now we'll find out if you can take the time to get rid of him." So he gets \$100,000 back next time, you know? That we did.